

Miles, Nelson A.

The American army officer Nelson Appleton Miles, b. near Westminster, Mass., Aug. 8, 1839, d. May 15, 1925, rose to prominence fighting in the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War, achieved fame in campaigns against the American Indians, and continued his distinguished military career until his retirement in 1903. Involved in nearly every encounter of the Army of the Potomac, he reached the rank of major general of volunteers (1865) and was four times wounded. At the end of the Civil War, Miles accepted a commission as colonel in the regular army. Assigned to the West, he served with distinction until 1891 in various Indian campaigns: first in the Red River War (1874-75) against the Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Comanche in Texas; then against the Sioux leaders SITTING BULL and CRAZY HORSE (1876-77); against the Nez Perce chief JOSEPH (1877); and, finally, against the Chiracahua Apache GERONIMO (1886). He also led troops that were called out to quell disorders accompanying the PULLMAN STRIKE of 1894 and commanded the occupying force in Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War (1898). Miles was placed in command of the U.S. Army in 1895 and promoted to lieutenant general in 1901. His books include *Personal Recollections and Observations* (1896) and *Serving the Republic* (1911).

Lawrence C. Kelly

Bibliography: Amchan, A., *The Most Famous Soldier in America* (1990); Johnson, V. W., *The Unregimented General* (1962).

FRIDAY, DEC. 20, 1996

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW YOU KNOW



Top soldier

Distinguished American soldier Nelson A. Miles, born in Westminster, Mass., in 1839, rose to the Army's

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Miles raised a company of volunteers and became a Union Army lieutenant. By 1865, he had fought in every important battle except one.

He was wounded four times, won the Medal of Honor (1892) and became a major general commanding 26,800 men at the age of 26. At war's end, Miles was commissioned a colonel in the regular army.

He was promoted to brigadier general in 1880, to major general in 1890 and fought in numerous engagements against Indian tribes in the West.

In 1894, Miles commanded troops sent to Chicago to quell the Pullman strike. In 1895, he became commander of the U.S. Army and retired in 1903.

Miles died in Washington in 1925.

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